



# Shanghai Consulate News for Americans

Issue 49

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## American Citizen Services (ACS) Contact Information

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Open 8:00am - 11:30am

and 1:30pm - 3:30pm

Monday to Friday

\*Closed on Wednesday  
afternoons, weekends,  
and holidays.

After Hours Emergencies:  
(86-21) 3217-4650

ShanghaiACS@state.gov

Homepage:  
[shanghai.usembassy-  
china.org.cn/service.html](http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/service.html)

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## IRS Upcoming Workshop & Contact Info

The American Citizen Services section of the U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai is happy to announce that this year again an attaché from the IRS will visit Shanghai to conduct a tax workshop on Wednesday, March 7 from 3:00pm to 5:00pm.

To reserve a seat for the workshop and receive additional instructions, please send an email to  
[ShanghaiACS@state.gov](mailto:ShanghaiACS@state.gov).

Please remember that only IRS employees are authorized to provide guidance to individuals on tax matters. Inquiries on tax matters should be directed to the

IRS. For specific questions on taxes you may email the IRS field office at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing at [irs.beijing@irs.gov](mailto:irs.beijing@irs.gov); please allow several days for a reply.

Taxpayers located outside the U.S. may also contact the IRS by **mail** at:  
Internal Revenue Service  
P.O. Box 920  
Bensalem, PA 19020

Or you may **telephone or FAX** the Philadelphia Service Center office at:  
Tel: 267-941-1000 (not toll-free)  
Fax: 215-516-2555  
Phone service available from 6:00 am to 11:00 pm (EST) M-F

## Extended Hours at the ACS Unit

The American Citizen Services unit of the U.S. Consulate General Shanghai is pleased to announce the opening of extended hours on a trial basis. Appointments for passport and notary services are available between **5pm and 7pm on Thursday, March 8**. To make an appointment for one of these time slots please see our website at [http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/appointment\\_system011309.html](http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/appointment_system011309.html).

We would very much appreciate your feedback concerning this initiative and welcome your comments at [ShanghaiACS@state.gov](mailto:ShanghaiACS@state.gov).

## Upcoming Holidays & Other Closures

A full list of all of our holiday closings is online at <http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/holidays.html>. The Consulate will be **CLOSED** on the following days:

**February 20, Monday:**

**Presidents' Day**

(总统节 Zǒng Tǒng Jié)

**March 29, Thursday:**

**Administrative Day**

(内部管理日 Nèibù Guǎnlǐ Rì)

**April 30, Monday:**

**Administrative Day**

(内部管理日 Nèibù Guǎnlǐ Rì)

## Submit Your Registration and Ballot Request Form for Upcoming February and March 2012 Primaries

### Register to Vote and Request Your Ballot

Submit your registration/ballot request form (FPCA) timed according to **your State's election date requirements** as listed below for the February and March 2012 Presidential Preference Primaries (P), and State Primaries (S):

The following States allow you to submit a registration/ballot request form (FPCA) now, which will be valid through the 2012 November Presidential election.

Arizona (P): February 28  
Georgia (P): March 6  
Ohio (S): March 6  
Oklahoma (P): March 6  
Tennessee (P): March 6  
Texas (P,S): March 6  
Virginia (P): March 6  
Alabama (P,S): March 13  
Mississippi (P,S): March 13  
Louisiana (P,S): March 24

For the following States, the registration/ballot request form (FPCA) is valid only in the year it is submitted. To ensure your request is valid for all

elections in 2012 submit a registration/ballot request form (FPCA) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE after December 31st.

Michigan (P): February 28  
Massachusetts (P): March 6  
Vermont (P): March 6  
Illinois (P,S): March 20

Go to [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov) and get started! It only takes a few minutes!

All members of the U.S. Uniformed Services, their family members and

*(Continued on Page 3)*

## Travel Warnings and Alerts

*Security reminder: It is advisable that you and your family review your personal security profile and be aware of your surroundings at all times.*

Since our previous Newsletter, the U.S. Department of State has issued new Travel Warnings for the following countries:

<u>Mexico</u>	02/08/2012
<u>Syria</u>	02/06/2012
<u>Pakistan</u>	02/02/2012
<u>Iraq</u>	01/19/2012

Travel Warnings are issued to describe long-term, protracted conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable. A Travel Warning is also issued when the U.S. Government's ability to assist American citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a drawdown of its staff. This information is available at

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/tw/tw\\_1764.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html).

The U.S. Department of State also has issued new Travel Alerts:

<u>Panama</u>	02/05/2012
<u>Bahrain</u>	01/23/2012

Travel Alerts are issued to disseminate information about short-term conditions generally within a particular country or region that pose imminent risks to the security of U.S. citizens. Natural disasters, terrorist attacks, coups, anniversaries of terrorist events, election-related demonstrations or violence, and high-profile events such as international conferences or regional sports events are examples of conditions that might generate a Travel Alert. This information is available at : [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/pa/pa\\_1766.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1766.html) .

The most up-to-date information regarding permitted and prohibited items on flights can be viewed online at

<http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm>.

For additional information, please visit "Americans Traveling Abroad" on the U.S. Department of State website: [http://travel.state.gov/visa/americans/americans\\_1252.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/americans/americans_1252.html).

Students traveling abroad may wish to visit the State Department site designed for them:

<http://studentsabroad.state.gov/>.

To obtain up-to-date information on security conditions, please call 1-888-407-4747 (toll free in the United States), or +1-202-501-4444 if you are outside the United States.



## Submit Your Registration and Ballot Request Form for Upcoming February and March 2012 Primaries

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citizens residing outside the U.S. who are residents from these States should submit an FPCA for these elections by going to the FVAP.gov web portal or by following the instructions in the Voting Assistance Guide, also available at [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov).

Be sure you include an email address, phone number, and/or fax number on your absentee ballot application in case your local election official needs to contact you. Remember, many States allow you to submit your form electronically, and deliver your ballot electronically or provide online ballot access. Go to FVAP.gov or your State's election website to see how you can return your form.

To find out the status of your registra-

tion/absentee ballot request, contact your local election office at <http://www.fvap.gov/shortcuts/wheresecondfpc.html>, or visit your State website.

### Vote the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

The FWAB is a backup ballot. If 30 days before the election (or longer based on your geographic location) you think you will not receive your State ballot in time to vote and return it, (especially in January Primary States) vote the FWAB at [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov). The FWAB is also available in embassies and consulates and military installations around the world. You may submit the FWAB any time after submitting an FPCA.

### Additional information

Check your State's election website for specific information on candidates, elections, contact information and links to your local election offices. Find your State's website via FVAP's web portal:

[www.fvap.gov/reference/links.html](http://www.fvap.gov/reference/links.html).

*FVAP can be contacted at 1-800-438-8683. Citizens may reach FVAP toll-free from 67 countries by using the toll-free numbers listed on the FVAP web portal, [www.fvap.gov/contact/index.html](http://www.fvap.gov/contact/index.html).*

*Questions regarding the above may also be referred to the Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program, Department of Defense, 1155 Defense Pentagon, Washington, DC, 20301-1155, [vote@fvap.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov), and at [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov).*

## Get Ready for the Great Dragon Baby Boom

Jan. 29, 2011 (Xinhua) -- Although dragons may scare some people, many young Chinese couples are determined to have a child this year despite pressures their offspring may face in coming years.

A doctor in Hong Kong expects a 5 percent rise in births in the Year of the Dragon. Shanghai is expecting 180,000 dragon babies this year.

Maternity wards in Shanghai's hospitals were crowded during the Chinese New Year holiday. At the 10th People's Hospital, more than 40 babies were born during the first five days of the lunar New Year. Medical workers were forced to put extra beds in every maternity ward to accommodate the new mothers and babies. Zhou Wen said her son's birth in the Year of the Dragon was a surprise. "He was due about a week before the New Year. I think he'll bring us good luck, as the

dragon is a symbol of wisdom and bravery." Zhou and her husband named the child Wang Zhoulin, with "lin" meaning "dragon." The same character has been given to several other "dragon babies" born at the same hospital.

In Beijing, every bed at the city's Maternity Hospital has been booked through August. The hospital has decided to limit expectant mothers to 1,000 every month in order to ensure space in the delivery room when their babies are due. Li Jing, an expectant mother in Jinan, eastern Shandong Province, is fed up with having to wait several hours for a prenatal check. "I sort of 'planned' for the baby to be born in the Year of the Dragon, because the whole family believes a dragon baby is auspicious," said Li, who is due in April. "But so many dragon babies are due this year. It will be hard for them to

enter kindergartens and schools in a couple of years," she said.

Li has good reason to worry, as all the recent baby booms, which happened in 2000, the last Year of the Dragon, the auspicious year of the "Golden Pig" in 2007 and in 2008, the year China hosted the Olympics, were followed by shortages in resources ranging from available delivery room beds to openings at kindergartens and primary schools.

Jinan-based office worker Yang Qin remembered having to offer "deal sweeteners" to a kindergarten chief, and then to a primary school principal, to secure a place for her daughter, who was born in 2000. In Beijing, some "Olympic babies" have been waiting to enter kindergarten, despite the government's efforts over the past two years to open more kindergartens.

## IRS Tax Time Scams and Phishing

It is that time of year again, tax time. Here are a few reminders and some information from the Internal revenue Service that may help alleviate a little of the tax time stress.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:** The IRS does not initiate contact with taxpayers by email to request detailed personal or financial information. The IRS does not send any communication requesting your PIN numbers, passwords or similar access information for credit cards, banks or other financial accounts.

**What is phishing?** Phishing is a scam typically carried out by unsolicited email and/or websites that pose as legitimate sites and lure unsuspecting victims to provide personal and financial information.

All unsolicited email claiming to be from either the IRS or any other IRS-related components such as the **Office of Professional Responsibility** or **EFTPS**, should be reported to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov).

### What to do if you receive a suspicious IRS-related communication

If	Then
You receive an <b>email</b> claiming to be from the IRS that contains a <b>request for personal information</b> ...	<p><b>Do not reply.</b></p> <p><b>Do not open any attachments.</b> Attachments may contain malicious code that will infect your computer.</p> <p><b>Do not click on any links.</b></p> <p>If you clicked on links in a suspicious email or phishing website and entered confidential information, visit our <a href="#">identity protection</a> page.</p> <p><b>Forward</b> the email as-is, to us at <a href="mailto:phishing@irs.gov">phishing@irs.gov</a>.</p> <p><b>After you forward</b> the email and/or header information to us, <b>delete the original email</b> message you received.</p>
You discover a <b>website</b> on the Internet that <b>claims to be the IRS</b> but you suspect it is bogus ...	... send the URL of the suspicious site to <a href="mailto:phishing@irs.gov">phishing@irs.gov</a> . Please add in the subject line of the email, 'Suspicious website'.
You receive a <b>phone call</b> or <b>paper letter via mail</b> from an individual <b>claiming to be the IRS</b> but you suspect they are not an IRS employee ...	<p><b>Phone call:</b></p> <p>Ask for a call back number and employee badge number.</p> <p><b>Contact the IRS</b> to determine if the caller is an IRS employee with a legitimate need to contact you. If you determine the person calling you is an IRS employee with a legitimate need to contact you, call them back.</p> <p><b>Letter or notice via paper mail:</b></p> <p><b>Contact the IRS</b> to determine if the mail is a legitimate IRS letter.</p> <p>If it is a legitimate IRS letter, reply if needed.</p> <p>If caller or party that sent the paper letter is <b>not legitimate</b>, contact the <a href="#">Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration</a> at 1.800.366.4484.</p>
You receive an unsolicited <b>e-mail or fax, involving a stock or share purchase</b> ...	<p><b>... and you are a U.S. citizen located in the United States or its territories or a U.S. citizen living abroad.</b></p> <p>Complete the appropriate complaint form with the <a href="#">U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission</a>. Forward email to <a href="mailto:phishing@irs.gov">phishing@irs.gov</a>. Please add in the subject line of the email, 'Stock'.</p> <p>If you are a victim of monetary or identity theft, you may submit a complaint through the <a href="#">FTC Complaint Assistant</a>.</p> <p><b>... and you are not a U.S. citizen and reside outside the United States.</b></p> <p>Complete the appropriate complaint form with the <a href="#">U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission</a>. Contact your securities regulator and file a complaint.</p> <p>Forward email to <a href="mailto:phishing@irs.gov">phishing@irs.gov</a>. Please add in the subject line of the e-mail, 'Stock'.</p> <p>If you are a victim of monetary or identity theft, you may report your complaint to <a href="http://econsumer.gov">econsumer.gov</a>.</p>
You receive an unsolicited <b>fax (such as Form W8-BEN) claiming to be from the IRS, requesting personal information</b> ...	<p><b>Contact the IRS</b> to determine if the fax is from the IRS.</p> <p>If you learn the fax is not from the IRS, please send us the information via email at <a href="mailto:phishing@irs.gov">phishing@irs.gov</a>. In the subject line of the email, please type the word 'FAX'.</p>
<p><b>You have a tax-related question</b> ...</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Do not submit tax-related questions to <a href="mailto:phishing@irs.gov">phishing@irs.gov</a>.</p>	If you have a tax-related question, unrelated to phishing or identity theft, please <a href="#">contact the IRS</a> .

## News: China to Crack Down on Expats Working Illegally

Dec. 26, 2011 (Xinhua) -- CHINA aims to curb illegal entry, stay and employment of foreigners, something which has developed into a "prominent problem" in the world's second largest economy.

The State Council yesterday submitted a draft law on exit and entry administration to the National People's Congress Standing Committee, the country's top legislature, for its first reading.

The existing law on exit and entry administration, established 26 years ago when China was far from "the world's workshop," barely mentioned illegal employment of foreigners in China.

Under the draft, foreigners must get work permits and residence certificates before being employed.

Foreigners who work illegally in China will be fined between 5,000 yuan (US\$792) and 20,000 yuan, and may be detained from five to 15 days for serious violations. Those who illegally provide job placement services for foreigners or illegally employ foreigners would be also fined. "We shall put forth efforts on regularizing foreigners who are working in China, do better in visa issuing, and strengthen residential management of foreigners," Yang Huanning, deputy minister of public security, said yesterday.

As a populous country, China would like to introduce more high-end professionals and limit the inflow of low-end workers, Yang said.

If a foreigner holds a visa allowing a maximum stay of 180

days, he or she will not need to apply for a residence certificate. If the visa allows a stay longer than 180 days and indicates that a residence certificate is needed, he or she must apply for it within 30 days after entering the country.

According to the draft law, the period of validity of a residence certificate will vary from 180 days to five years. During their stay in China, foreigners should carry valid identity documents and submit to police inspection, according to the draft law.

It also stipulates that foreigners can apply to the police for a permanent residence certificate if an individual makes a significant contribution to China's economic and social development, or meets relevant requirements of permanent residence.

Foreigners who apply to stay in China as refugees will be granted a temporary-stay permit during an investigation and receive a refugee identity document for living in China after an application is approved.

An article about the collection of biological information for the use of border control is in the draft. It grants police and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the right to issue regulations on the collection and storing of biological information, such as fingerprints of travelers entering and exiting China. Collecting biological information will help identify travelers, improve the efficiency of border control and protect state security, Yang said.

According to the government, the number of people entering and exiting China has increased by 10 percent annually since 1990. In 2010, the number reached 382 million, including 52 million foreigners.

## Safety Update: Physical Altercations with Drivers

The American Citizen Services Unit has received several reports of American citizens being injured following physical altercations with drivers of automobiles within our consular district.

Such physical altercations have sprung from the citizen tapping or otherwise making physical contact with an automobile driving across a pedestrian crosswalk very close to the US citizen. The ACS Unit urges American citizens to be cautious when walking as a pedestrian in China, as drivers in China may not follow the same driving customs

as in the United States and may not yield to pedestrians. If a car does come too close as you are crossing the street, we urge you not to hit the car as this may lead to a physical confrontation.





## News: Pension Plan for Foreigners

Dec. 23, 2011 (Shanghai Daily) -- SOME foreigners who sign up to a new social security system will be allowed to retire in China so they can claim their pensions, Xinhua news agency said yesterday, offering details of a new tax that foreign businesses fear will push up costs.

The government has so far given only basic details about the scheme, which all foreigners who work in China are supposed to have started paying into



Foreign executives in China have expressed concern that the tax will increase already rising costs, and that the plan is too vague and will be hard for companies to implement.

One of those concerns has been that foreigners will not be able to access money from unemployment benefits or pensions because work visas are tied to jobs and become invalid when a person is no longer employed.

Citing an unidentified Beijing social security official, Xinhua said the government had made a decision on pensions at least.

"Those foreigners who contribute to social insurance and fulfill conditions will get social security, and will be able to, for example, retire in China and draw a pension," the report said, without providing details of how that might happen.

Money will also be paid back upon "written application at the end of the social insurance relationship," it said.

Otherwise, the money will be kept "until (the person) returns to work again in China."

Of the 30,000 foreigners working in Beijing, only 2,000 had so far registered to pay the new tax, it said.

Foreigners are also expected to pay contributions from October, although many local tax bureaus have said they are still unsure how to collect the money.

China's rules will make it more like policies in many European Union countries, where citizens and foreigners alike pay into the system. China's existing social security net offers meager protection for its citizens, compared to schemes in Europe.

## News: Riders Warned about 'Smart Thieves'

Dec. 22, 2011 (Global Times) -- Shanghai commuters were warned to keep a good eye on their personal belongings Thursday, especially wallets and mobile phones at crowded places, with police saying that thieves in the city, who have proven to be masters of their art, are bound to be more desperate for cash as the end of the year closes in.

Since the start of the year, police have apprehended 2,300 thieves and 58 theft gangs, recovering a slew of items from public transport bus and subway theft cases worth more than 3.2 million yuan (\$506,000), the city's public security bureau said Thursday.

The bureau added that extra officers are being dispatched at bus and subway stations, where countless people fall victim to thieves during the year-end period.

He said that mobile phones, particularly iPhone models, are a popular lift, as resale value for them is high in outside provinces.

"Thieves are getting smarter now," said Jin Chan, an officer with Shanghai Municipal Subway Police. "They know what to look for; people's earphones let them know in which pocket their phone or digital audio player is - and makes it easy for them to snatch without the person realizing until too late."

Jin said that people can prevent themselves from becoming an easy target by carrying such gadgets in discreet places, such as inner coat pockets.

Video surveillance showed that theft victims were commonly approached while they were boarding or exiting trains, or passing through turnstiles

and busy crowds, when they were more vulnerable to theft, said police.

Jin added that victims are advised to report theft as soon as possible to increase chances of catching the thieves.

"We can pull surveillance sooner, which allows us to track down thieves more easily, who are less likely to go far within a shorter time frame," he said.

